

“The World Seems Out Of Control, But God Is Raising Up Difference Makers”

Daniel 1

Sermon Series: “The World Seems Out Of Control, But...”

1. The world seems out of control (v. 1-7).

- A. We experience the consequences of our sin and other’s sin (v. 1-2).**
- B. We experience challenging circumstances in a fallen, broken world (v. 3).**
- C. We experience opposition from the world (v. 4-7).** Nebuchadnezzar was seeking to isolate, indoctrinate, and assimilate these Hebrew youths into Babylonian culture. The world is still doing the same type of thing today.
- D. We can often feel like the world is winning and God’s people are losing.**

2. Conviction: The world seems out of control, but God is in control and raising up people to make a difference in the world.

Statements of God’s sovereignty: 1:2, 1:9, 1:17-20, 1:21

-The fact that God is in control does not mean life is not hard in this fallen world. He works all things together for good but not necessarily for easy.

3. Action: We will live with biblical conviction instead of compromising and conforming to the culture so that God will use us to make a difference in the culture (v. 8-16).

-Why would we want to live like the culture because it is definitely not working?

-What does it mean to live with biblical conviction?

- 1. Conviction is produced by the Word of God.**
- 2. Conviction is deciding in advance our course of action.**
- 3. Conviction is an expression of the Lordship of Christ over us.**
- 4. Conviction produces obedience by prompting certain actions and preventing others.**
- 5. Conviction keeps us from being conformed to the culture around us.**
- 6. Conviction keeps us from using circumstances to justify compromise.**
- 7. Conviction is to be expressed with wisdom, tact, and humility.**
- 8. Conviction empowers courageous stands that enable us to make a difference in the world.**

-How do we make a difference? **Show and Tell.** Live it out and proclaim the gospel (give examples). Be salt and light wherever God sovereignly places us. Use the gifts God has given us to make a difference in the church and the world (find a need and

meet it, find a hurt and heal it). Live as fishers of men sharing the gospel. We see Daniel, Hannah, Mishael, and Azariah doing this even to kings time and time again in the course of their lives as recorded in this book.

4. Christ connections:

-Jesus left the culture of heaven and came to the foreign, pagan, sinful culture of earth, but he never compromised or sinned. He died on the cross to end our exile and reconcile us to God.

-Daniel outlasted the Evil Empire because Jesus outlasted the Roman Empire and ultimately the empire of Satan through His resurrection. We can stand in His resurrection power.

Danny Akin writes, “Christ is the greater Daniel, the greater Hannaniah, the greater Mishael, and the greater Azariah. Jesus refused to compromise when he faced the emperor behind the emperor—Satan. How did Satan tempt Jesus to defile himself? He did so with food! Yet Christ remained faithful. Christ took the judgment faithless Israel deserved at the hands of another pagan empire, but he walked away from death to outlast the Roman Empire and every empire to come.

There is a certain divine irony in all this that is hard to miss. It is grace filled and gospel rich. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah will give a faithful witness before Ashpenaz and Nebuchadnezzar and be brought to live in the king’s palace. Jesus, in contrast, would give a faithful witness before Herod and Pilate and be nailed to a cross. And yet by his death all who trust him will live forever with the King of kings and Lord of lords in his eternal palace. So be strong and of good courage in whatever God calls you to do. He is with you, and he is accomplishing so much more than meets the eye!”